

1 – 9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a structured hard chrome layer, comprising electrodepositing chromium from an electrolyte onto a workpiece, said electrolyte comprising:

- (a) a Cr (VI) compound in an amount corresponding to 50 g/l to 600 g/l of chromic acid anhydride;
- (b) 0.5 g/l to 10 g/l of sulphuric acid;
- (c) 1 g/l to 20 g/l of aliphatic sulphonic acid, that comprises 1 to 6 carbon atoms, and
- (d) 10 g/l to 200 g/l of at least one compound forming a dense cathode film, said compound being selected from the group consisting of ammonium molybdate, alkali molybdate, alkaline earth molybdate, ammonium vanadate, alkali vanadate, alkaline earth vanadate, ammonium zirconate, alkali zirconate, and alkaline earth zirconate,

wherein the cathodic current yield in the production of the structured hard chrome layer is 12% or less, such that said hard chrome layer comprises at least one of a cup-shaped structure, a labyrinth-like structure, or a column-shaped structure.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the Cr(VI) compound is CrO_3 .

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the aliphatic sulphonic acid is methane sulphonic acid.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the compound forming a dense cathode film is $(\text{NH}_4)_6\text{Mo}_7\text{O}_{24} \cdot 4 \text{H}_2\text{O}$.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the electrolyte comprises substantially no fluorides.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, which further comprises applying a current density of from 20 A/dm^2 to 200 A/dm^2 to the workpiece.

16. (Withdrawn) A structured hard chrome layer, obtained by the method of claim 10, wherein said hard chrome layer comprises at least one of a cup-shaped structure, a labyrinth-like structure, or a column-shaped structure.

17 – 21. (Cancelled)